Kirti Chakra; permanently disabled officers and dependent members of their families; and to the war widows of post Independent era. Rail travel concession is also being provided to the war-widows by the Ministry of Railways.

(vii) 35 War memorial hostels have been constructed to provide accommodation to wards of war bereaved and disabled personnel to enable them to pursue their studies. Kendriya Sainik Board also provides education grant to the children staying in these hostels.

(viii) Kendriya Sainik Board and Rajya/Zila Sainik Boards provide financial assistance from Welfare Funds to old and infirm ex-Servicemen and their widows in indigent circumstances. Financial assistance is also provided to needy ex-Servicemen for medical treatment, daughter's marriage, repair of house etc.

MEDICAL FACILITIES :

Defence personnel after retirement are provided adequate medical cover under a comprehensive package. The package consists of the following medical facilities/concessions :-

(i) Ex-Servicemen are provided free outpatient treatment in Military Hospitals. They are also provided in-patient treatment in Military Hospitals, except for psychiatric treatment, cancer treatment, kidney transplantation and coronary bypass surgery.

(ii) For ailments in respect of which treatment is not available in Military Hospitals, medical cover is provided under the Group Insurance schemes of the Armed Forces. Under the Group Insurance scheme, an amount of Rs. 100 lakh is paid for heart treatment, Rs. 75,000/- for Cancer treatment, Rs. 100 lakh for Renal transplant and Rs. 75,000/- for hip and knee joint replacement.

(iii) Those ex-Servicemen who are not covered under the medical insurance schemes, are provided financial assistance upto 60% of total expenditure on treatment of serious diseases, e.g., by-pass surgery, angiography, kidney renal transplant, cancer, coronary artery surgery, etc., by the Kendriya Sainik Board.

(iv) Ex-Servicemen can also take treatment in State Government civil hospitals.

(v) 24 MI Rooms and 12 Dental Centres have been set up for providing medical facilities exclusively to ex-Servicemen and their dependents.

(vi) Needy ex-Servicemen are also provided financial assistance for medical treatment from Raksha Mantris Discretionary Fund upto a maximum of Rs. 15,000/-.

Government have set up 127 Military Hospitals exclusively for Armed Forces serving personnel, ex-Servicemen and their families. These hospitals are based on regionalised patterns of health care delivery system and grouped into large Command Hospitals, Zonal hospitals, Medium hospitals and small hospitals.

There is no scheme at present on the pattern of Central Government employees for providing medical facility to ex-Servicemen, as they are provided adequate medical cover under the above mentioned schemes of the Ministry of Defence.

[English]

Passport Office, Bangalore

2296. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of passport applications pending with the passport office at Bangalore as on December 31, 1996;

(b) the number of passports issued by the said office during the last three years as on December 31, 1996, yearwise;

(c) whether the said office has sufficient staff to clear the workload;

(d) if not, the steps being taken to post sufficient number of employees;

(e) whether the Government are contemplating to open passport offices in other cities like Hubli/Belgaum/Mangalore in Karnataka; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) 6600 passport applications were pending with the Passport Office, Bangalore as on 31 December, 1996. Of these, 703 were pending for more than one month.

(b) The number of passports issued by the Passport Office in Bangalore during the last three years is as follows :

1994	1995	1996
77646	95672	105905

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) There is no proposal presently under consideration of the Government to open any more Passport offices in Karnataka as the existing office is able to cater to the needs of passport applicants from

the state and issue a passport within a reasonable time. A Passport Collection Centre is already functioning at Mangalore.

(f) Does not arise.

Ayurvedic College and Hospitals

2297. SHRI ANNASAHIB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Ayurvedic colleges and hospitals in the country at present;

(b) the total financial assistance provided to these colleges and hospitals during the last two years;

(c) whether the Government have any proposal to open new Ayurvedic college, and hospitals in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) As per information available there are 118 Ayurvedic colleges and 2136 Ayurvedic Hospitals in the country.

(b) The total financial assistance provided under Central Scheme for upgradation of P.G. Department and improving and strengthening of exicting under Graduate colleges of ISM&H during the last two years is as under :

1994-95	-	114.92 lakhs
1995-96	-	236.17 lakhs

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Does not arise.

Violation of Air Space

2298. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :
SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL :
SHRI MUKHTAR ANIS :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of violation of Indian air space by aircrafts of other countries, especially Pakistan, during 1995 and 1996;

(b) the measures taken to stop such intrusion in terms of both detection as well as defensive capacity;

(c) whether the cases of violation were brought to the notice of the countries concerned; and

(d) if so, their reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) During the years 1995 and 1996, the number of violations of Indian airspace by the aircraft of other countries was 22 and 12 respectively. Of these, 16 violations in 1995 and 9 violations in 1996 were by Pakistani aircraft.

(b) Appropriate air defence measures exist to check such violations. These are also reviewed from time to time.

(c) and (d) Such violations are taken up with the country concerned as and when considered appropriate.

Highway Ambulance Project

2299. SHRI N. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY :
SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have launched Highway Ambulance Project recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and salient features of the project, funding arrangement, objective, coverage and target for the current year-extension plans etc;

(c) the details of National Road Safety Plan worked out for accident prone areas; and

(d) the details of action plan worked out to provide Road side amenities along the national highways during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There is no seperate Road Safety Plan for accident prone areas of National Highways. However, various improvement works which have a bearing on road safety are taken up on a continuous basis alongwith other developmental works.

(d) Under the scheme of wayside amenities along National Highways, during the current year an estimate costing Rs. 62.50 lakhs have been sanctioned for providing passenger oriented wayside amenities at Kms. 439.0 on NH - 8 in Maharashtra.

Regional Offices of KVS

2300. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of regional offices of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan functioning in the country at present;

(b) whether the Government propose to set up a new Regional office in Kerala; and